PERIODICO EN ESPAÑOL ADENTRO

CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM ★ LUCHA POR EL COMUNISMO ★ PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

Volume 56 No.12 June 5, 2024 Suggested Donation $1

KCC STUDENT-WORKER FIGHTBACK

THIS GENOCIDE SYSTEM: SHUT IT DOWN— WITH COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

BROOKLYN, NY, May 23 —"IF GAZA DOESN'T GET IT? SHUT IT DOWN!" And shut it down is exactly what a militant, multiracial group of overall more than 50 Kingsborough Community College students and faculty did! The fiery protest was sponsored by KCC clubs Common Ground and the Muslim Students Association, joined by members of the Progressive Labor Party, and led by mainly Black, Latin, Arab, Palestinian and immigrant women workers. The protest was against a campus event featuring a "former high-ranking officer" in the genocidal Israeli army, sponsored by a pro-Zionist campus club.

When we learned KCC's president canceled the event, the rally proceeded anyway, with student-led anger boiling in the streets over the U.S.-backed genocide in Gaza, and the support of local community mass organizations. Then, as the rally approached campus, KCC closed its gates — with the NYPD blocking all entrances and even local side streets. With waves of class cancellations, we turned up and shut down the racist business as usual!

Students picketing in front of the main campus gate. ARAB, JEWISH, BLACK AND WHITE: WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNTE! A multiracial international student-worker-solider led communist revolution is the only way to get free, not Palestinian nationalism.

Women-led, multiracial student-worker unity SHUTS IT DOWN!

With the continuous chanting and continuous arrival of waves of students and workers, we held our ground at the gates and kept the main gate shut for almost seven hours, with all gates shut at one point! We easily drowned out the goofy, nearly all-white fascist counter-protestors, and one fascist professor who waved the U.S. flag near us quickly fled and later cried to the bosses' Jerusalem Post that he felt threatened (5/15). Meanwhile, revolutionary communist PLP members led militant internationalist chants like "ARAB, JEWISH, BLACK AND WHITE: WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNTE!" and called for international working class revolution versus anti-working class "national liberation" and capitalism.

The only violence were threats from the fascists, who yelled out rape threats and one threatening to "burn down" the nearby halal cart – to which the lines of police guarding campus property enabled. Communists in PLP and more KCC students than ever know that the NYPD, KKK, Israeli fascists and CUNY administration are all the same! And so, many students on the way to campus stayed to join or watch the protest, meet Common Ground and MSA club members, discuss Common Ground's leaflet and CHALLENGE, and exchange contact information.

Illusion of democracy, reality of sharpening fascism

On the surface, the large police presence may appear like an overreaction. In essence, however, the all-out police presence - from the local precinct with reinforcements from Manhattan - is a sign of weakness and desperation from the U.S. ruling class. The U.S.' democratic façade is slipping as the bosses are forced into supporting their most important imperialist lap dog, Israel, which guards U.S. imperialism's vital Middle Eastern oil interests. In weakness and desperation, the bosses resort to open fascist terror.

These aren't the only illusions communists in PLP are on the ground here exposing. The administration claims they're concerned about safety, but they spread tired 'copaganda' about the supposed violent intentions of the protestors. Almost no students believe this. They see an administration that refuses to send even an email about multiple hate crimes against a Muslim halal cart worker outside of campus, but is perfectly fine with thousands of students walking by graffiti that says "Kill Palestinians" every day.

And the harder that Black Democrat mayors like Eric Adams push the illusion of democracy and liberal Black administrators at KCC push the illusion of neutrality, the more visible this reality becomes to masses. The bosses expose their own fake "neutrality" more clearly than a leaflet, and they can't hide — we charge them with genocide!

Continued on page 8

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

EDITORIAL *Israel slaughters, U.S. grows more desperate..p2*

NEWARK-RUTGERS
Rutgers encampment: courage of workers and youth spreads.. p3

MAY DAY 2024
Brooklyn, Colombia, Haiti, Oakland, Pakista p 4-8

LETTERS *DC: Workers from Iran remind me that we're communists..p6*

SCAN ME

OUR FIGHT

Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

CONTACT US

Email: desafio.challenge@gmail.com
Mail: Box 808 GPO, Brooklyn, NY 11202
Internet: Online: www.plp.org
Twitter: @PLPchallenge
Facebook: @Challenge Desafio
Instagram: @ PLPchallenge

@PLPCHALLENGE

WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.
While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049)
published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals.
1 issue $1. One Year: $20. Six months: $15. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals,
GPO Box 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202
June 5, 2024 • Volume 56 No.12

Editorial

Israel slaughters, U.S. grows more desperate

Seventy-six years after the Nakba, the catastrophic displacement of 700,000 Palestinians from their homes, the butchering Israeli bosses marked the occasion with an invasion of Rafah, Gaza's southernmost city. They forced masses of brutalized civilians to flee yet again to mythical "safe zones" with no water or sanitation. After 200 days of the Zionist regime's genocide in Gaza and an unchecked rampage by settler death squads in the West Bank, more than 35,000 Palestinians, mainly women and children, have been slaughtered. With Gaza's hospitals in a state of collapse and food, fuel, and medicine shut off at closed border crossings, the true toll is likely much higher (Reuters, 5/14). No one knows how many helpless civilians are buried under the rubble from Israel's one-ton bombs, courtesy of Genocide Joe Biden and his fellow mass murderers in Washington.

Despite blatant lies by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu about Israel's "limited operation" in Rafah, an area the size of Newark is an unfolding humanitarian disaster. Workers and children are at risk of death from starvation, thirst, and disease. Over 900,000 people–of a total Gaza population of 2.2 million–have been forced out of Rafah since Israel's assault began (Al Jazeera, 5/20).

Despite warnings from rulers from Africa to China, and a ceasefire deal signed off on by Hamas, Israel's bosses are moving toward their savage final solution. Days before the Rafah invasion, Biden put a hold on a bomb shipment and warned Netanyahu that a full-scale attack would cross a "red line." But just one week later, Biden's flunkies announced a new $1 billion arms sale to Israel (CNN, 5/14). To preserve their shaky foothold in the Middle East, the U.S. rulers have no choice but to bankroll their junior partner in atrocities.

Now, more than ever, the international working class needs the revolutionary communist Progressive Labor Party (PLP). As the rulers plot their next bloodbath in their run-up to World War Three, we must build the only movement that can defeat imperialism and fascism, as it did in World War Two: communism, a dictatorship of the working class. Join PLP! Together we can build a red army to turn the guns around and smash this genocidal profit system for all time.

U.S. rulers' weakness & desperation

For the U.S. rulers, Israel and its fast-rising fascism present an irresolvable contradiction. They need Israel to project U.S. military power in the Middle East, home to the world's largest reserves of oil and gas. Abandoning Netanyahu and his Jewish supremacist regime would open the regional door to the imperialist rivals in China, Russia, and Iran. China is already seeking to pivot to the Middle East to exploit U.S. disarray (Guardian, 5/7).

At the same time, the U.S. can't afford to tie itself too tightly to a racist pariah state. Netanyahu has been charged by the International Criminal Court with "war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the starvation of civilians as a weapon of war and 'intentionally directing attacks against a civilian population'" (New York Times, 5/20). Biden discouraged the Rafah invasion because it reinforces the widening perception of U.S. complicity in genocide. And if China senses that a floundering U.S. empire is spread too thin by its various failing proxy wars, including the looming debacle in Ukraine, it might accelerate its plan to invade Taiwan.

Biden's Vietnam moment?

As Biden gears up for this fall's presidential election, his finance capital backers know they're at risk of losing the White House to the isolationist bosses behind Donald Trump. Biden is polling weakly among young and Black and Latin voters who deplore his role in the Gaza genocide. The liberal rulers are panicked at the prospect of mass actions at this summer's Democratic National Convention in Chicago, a potential replay of the anti-Vietnam War protests in 1968 that helped sink Democrat Hubert Humphrey (Centerforpolitics.org, 5/12)

For anti-racist workers, there is no "lesser evil" choice between liberal racist Biden and gutter racist Trump. They both support apartheid and genocide in Israel. They both stand for the vicious oppression of the international working class. Our only choice is to smash all racist politicians and the billionaire bosses behind them– to fight for communism, a society run by and for workers.

Jewish state a formula for racism and genocide

Netanyahu is in a tight spot. Despite pervasive anti-Palestinian racism within Israel, he is widely unpopular for his failure to rescue all the Israeli hostages. Many fear that an all-out ground war would put the hostages at even greater risk. But beyond Netanyahu's need to appease the bloodthirsty religious right in his governing kkkoalition, the fundamental problem is Jewish nationalism–Zionism. Most workers in Israel have been misled to believe that their security relies on a "Jewish and democratic state," as defined by the country's "Basic Laws." Many are loyal to Netanyahu's Likud Party, which is committed to a "Greater Israel" that stretches "from the river to the sea" (thenation.com, 11/22/23). The liberals "two-state solution" has been dead and buried for a long time.

But Israel can't annex the occupied West Bank (much less Gaza) and keep a Jewish majority without wholesale ethnic cleansing. In the West Bank,where illegal Jewish settlers are killing Palestinians with impunity, known Zionist terrorists in the Israeli government are running the show (New York Times, 5/16). An uninhabitable Gaza has been bombarded into "one big displacement camp" for descendants of those expelled by the 1948 Nakba, when Israel was born (npr.org, 5/15). As National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, one of the more outspoken Nazis in Netanyahu's cabinet, proclaimed at an Independence Day march, "We must return to Gaza now! We are coming home to the Holy Land! We must encourage…the voluntary emigration of the residents of Gaza" (haaretz.com, 5/14).

But if Zionism is the problem, Palestinian nationalism–and the small-time nationalist gangsters who lead Hamas and Fatah–cannot be the solution. For workers in Palestine/Israel, the one way out of the capitalist nightmare is to reject all nations and to unite to destroy all bosses and their poisonous capitalist system. The only solution is multiracial unity and communist revolution.

From campuses to worksites to the street, fight back!

Mass protests against the carnage in Gaza are disrupting the bosses' business as usual. Students and workers around the world are leading bold, inspiring actions, from encampments and graduation walkouts to sit-ins to block arms shipments. PLP applauds the courage, determination, and working-class solidarity of this fightback.

As most college students break for the summer, it's time to expand the fight beyond the campuses. We must take it to our neighborhoods, to our workplaces, and to key points of production. PLP calls on all students, workers, and soldiers to unite to keep this movement going and, most important, to join our Party. If we're going to smash this whole damn genocidal system, we're going to need to build a mass revolutionary communist organization. Every new comrade is another nail in the coffin of capitalism. We have a world to win!

Rutgers encampment: courage of workers and youth spreads

Newark, NJ—"Money for jobs and education- not for imperialist war and occupation!" This chant captured the spirit of May Day— the day we celebrate the solidarity of the international working class. Students in Newark and around the world are occupying capitalist education institutions complicit in the slaughter of workers in Palestine and worldwide. Students, teachers, and workers see the connection between these international attacks and their local conditions living under capitalism.

The Newark Solidarity Coalition, which includes students, teachers, community organizers, and members of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP), set up an encampment on the Rutgers Newark campus to protest the ongoing genocide of workers in Palestine. PLers distributed dozens of CHALLENGEs at both the Rutgers Newark and New Brunswick campuses and built connections with the organizers and participants. These encampments are part of an ever-growing movement across college campuses worldwide to demand an end to the slaughter of workers in Palestine.

Billions of U.S. dollars have been given to Israel—a racist apartheid state —to displace, starve, and slaughter 38,000 Palestinians.... Some of the demands of the Rutgers Coalition include, but aren't limited to Rutgers divesting (severing financial ties) from Tel-Aviv University, or any company or corporation profiting off of the genocide. These demands demonstrate growing consciousness among students and workers exposing the U.S. capitalist institutions that are all part of the imperialist war machine, fueling the attacks on workers abroad. It also exposed how reforms can be used to try and demobilize and keep workers from fighting back. This happened in the Rutgers New Brunswick campus where promises of dead-end reforms were accepted in exchange for ending solidarity encampments (NJ Spotlight News, 5/6).

In fact, there has been no shortage of reformist politicians, organizations, and misleaders present at these encampments and rallies. Organizations such as DSA and politicians such as Larry Hamm showed up to convince workers to try and solve the genocide in Palestine at the ballot box. Students and workers sent Hamm away, showing they are starting to realize it is the capitalist system that is the problem and not just specific leaders like Donald Trump or Joe Biden.

As the Newark encampment kicked off with a rally, members of the coalition led with chants of "Disclose, divest, we will not stop, we will not rest!", "From Palestine to Mexico, all the borders have to go!", "Money for jobs and education, not for war and occupation!", and "Not another nickel, not another crime, no more money for Israel's crimes!" Later that afternoon, workers involved with the Cosecha Movement joined in the rally. The courage of all these workers, students, and teachers - to the dismay of the U.S. and Israeli bosses - is contagious. The chants show that this is not only about Gaza, but about growing imperialist slaughter and reflects the effort to link Gaza's struggle with the racist disinvestment of Newark and its majority Black working-class neighborhoods.

PLP calls on all students, workers, and soldiers to unite to keep this movement going and, most importantly, to join our Party (see editorial on page 2) and fight for communism—not just for a taste of liberation at the encampment but for the whole experience.

Speakers at the rally made sharp connections linking the struggle in Gaza to the struggles in Newark, pointing out that gentrification is contributing to the city's ridiculously high rents and homelessness. One speaker pointed out that the Halo Tower currently being built in Newark is owned by Acier Holdings, a privately owned developing company whose President, Jake Glatzer, is a Zionist. Acier Holdings has a history of mismanaging funds and exploiting workers.

After 96 hours of encampment Rutgers President Jonathan Holloway, ordered the New Brunswick encampment be taken down, with the main demand of - divestment going unmet. However, students in Newark have been more militant in their demands, suggesting that Rutgers turn their 6,000 acres of land into affordable housing, a demand that is considered too radical for the liberal fascist Holloway and Rutgers Newark Chancellor Nancy Cantor, who sent an insincere display of support for the encampment. As the Newark encampment enters its third week, and after multiple meetings of negotiation between the Newark Solidarity Coalition and the Chancellor, the demands have still not been met. This is the administration's strategy: tedious sit-downs and negotiations rather than admitting that these capitalist institutions are more concerned with serving their fascist donors than making any decision that benefits students and workers.

It is clear that in this Dark Night period, some light is shining through. The worldwide campus protests against the genocide in Palestine shows what workers and students are capable of when they recognize the power of organizing and collective rage. The bosses already recognize that power, which is why they're sending their foot soldiers to break up these encampments while using suppression, surveillance, and violence to discredit our movements. It is not enough to call for divestments, it is not enough to call for a ceasefire, or reinvestments in the community. As long as capitalism and its institutions are upheld, workers will never be safe. The only answer to toppling capitalism is to build an international, antiracist, antisexist, communist movement. Only under communism where profits are abolished will we be able to win a world without genocide where the lives of the international working class are precious, and the needs of the people— not profits— will come first. Join us!

MLA Conference responds to Gaza genocide

New York City—With some key organizing by Progressive Labor Party (PLP) comrades, the Radical Caucus of the MLA (the Modern Language Association, the largest organization of literature professors in the world) held an online conference: "KEYWORDS: GAZA— Responding to the Genocide." The focus was on how U.S. imperialism was enabling Israeli genocide with arms, money and diplomacy. We targeted "the mass disinformation campaign" by Israel and the U.S. government about the genocide in Gaza. Seventy-eight faculty and students came together to organize solidarity against this genocide.

The mini-conference took place amid the doxxing, menacing and firing of campus militants just days before the explosion of Gaza protest encampments on over 100 U.S. campuses and in a dozen other countries (Aljazeera.com, 4/29). This was an important effort to stand against the rising fascism of U.S. rulers. PLP members pointed toward a world where students were not only organizing encampments, but workers and students were organizing the world - that's communism.

Capitalist state monopoly of violence

How cynical are these college administrators, arresting, beating, suspending and expelling students who dare to put up a tent on campus to protest Israel's forced expulsion of more than a million workers in Gaza. Yesterday's liberal deans are today's law-and-order enforcers. Behind the prattle about academic freedom we now see brutes in riot gear. Recently we fought for and won a MLA motion urging university administrators to defend student protestors. The administrators have done nothing. We must now convince our colleagues and students that the real enemy is capitalist state

Continued on page 8

This genocide system: shut it down—with communist revolution

Continued from page 1

Capitalist dictatorship and state violence

Unlike whatever the KCC administration, CUNY, New York City or the U.S. government claim, NO capitalist state —the government, cops, courts and legal system, educational institutions – is ever pro-working class, or neutral. The U.S. capitalist state has normalized fascist terror against peacefully protesting students against the backdrop of the declining, genocidal empire, with storm clouds of world war gathering around rising imperialist rivals China and Russia.

Most dangerously for the working class, unlike the Trump-led gutter racist Small Fascists, it's the liberals who are the Big Fascists. KCC's "neutral" liberal -and often Black - bosses and campus cops especially love to throw around words like "safety" to pretend they care about the students, but they serve the capitalist dictatorship. Unless we fight for workers' dictatorship and expose the liberal and "national liberation" misleaders – from Brooklyn to Gaza – they will lead us deeper into the arms of fascism and imperialist war.

Workers' dictatorship means smashing racism, sexism, imperialism, these racist borders and money. Workers' dictatorship means we run the world - the student encampments showed we can! - and use workers' state violence against the fascists wherever they crawl out of their holes.

Globalize communist revolution: build a mass PLP

Amidst the holocaust in Gaza, the times are clearly changing for KCC, this former Zionist bastion. The Nazi Kahanist Zionists lost their stranglehold over campus life. Soon enough, they'll lose our local staff chapter of the Professional Staff Congress (PSC) too; as PL'ers and friends grow, we've only gotten started exposing the sellout liberal misleaders and revisionists. The future is ours, and the students and workers are proving that endless imperialist wars is not our class' fate.

Over seven months, the fascist Israeli bosses have slaughtered more than 35,562 workers, while dropping more than twenty times the amount of bombs the U.S. used throughout the entire Iraq War over an area not much larger than Manhattan. Only a mass working class-led communist revolution, from all the rivers to all the seas from NYC, Gaza to Shanghai and between, can free us from this imperialist hellscape. We urgently continue using CHALLENGE within our mass organizations to build a mass, anti-imperialist student-worker movement and mass PLP which every student, worker and soldier can join and help build: FIGHT BACK and JOIN US!

May Day: power, power

Colombia: 'No more reformism, long live communism!'

The march to celebrate this year's International Workers Day was well attended, with many workers joining the march to support a variety of organizations (trade unions, left parties, workers' centers, environmentalist and community organizations to defend human rights, and feminists groups, amongst many others). Workers expressed their opposition to racism, sexism, forced displacement, and the devastating impact of the capitalist system. It was common to see here the general support for Palestine and against the ongoing genocide, which is now a central axis of the class struggle and the current global political debates, in the context of the new multi-polar reality.

With this in mind, on this great day, we celebrated one more year of struggle, with our sights set on the unity of the international working class under the banners and leadership of our communist party, Progressive Labor Party (PLP). We denounced the parasitic capitalist class domination and its racist wage system, its endless wars, its sexism that divides us and weakens us, and its fascism and increased violence against our class. We celebrated one more year of struggle, protests, work stoppages, blockades, and mobilizations that sustain our commitment to our communist ideal, as the only way to build a better world.

PLP, as a revolutionary necessity, was an early presence at the meeting place in downtown Bogota, talking to workers, defending our line, and exchanging information to plan later meetings. We distributed our paper, CHALLENGE, and 2,000 flyers, calling for a communist revolution and class solidarity with our Palestinian and Haitian sisters and brothers, who are facing bloody and systematic imperialist genocide and repression.

Our militant contingent marched behind a large sign featuring our newspaper. We were a dynamic and enthusiastic group of workers and students, members and friends of the Party. The whole event took place in the context of the current sup-

"Democracia electoral, dictadura patronal"
Solo la clase trabajadora organizada bajo la bandera del COMUNISMO, destruirá el sistema capitalista.
Trabajadores del mundo "UNIOS".
P.L.P. Partido Laboral Progresista.
FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM
LUCHA POR EL COMUNISMO
PLP
www.plp.org

Continued on page 6

Haiti: 'the true meaning of May Day'

HAITI, May 12—Comrades and friends of Progressive Labor Party here participated in our annual May Day celebration on May 1. The main activity was a forum and discussion about the nature of work under capitalism, especially for young workers. That was followed by some cultural activity and socializing, with revolutionary poetry, class-conscious music, and dinner. All told, about 60 people tasted real camaraderie that day.

To set the tone of our day, we began with a history of May Day and its importance to the international working class. The presenter, a young woman comrade, gave a short history of May Day, born in the struggle for the 8-hour work day in the United States. Next was the forum on the nature of work under the current system, moderated by two other young comrades. Several workers with different work experiences (teachers, health workers, clerical workers, rural workers, and unemployed workers) spoke about their jobs or joblessness, and how the rulers exploited them by paying low wages, working under miserable working conditions, or keeping

them from working for a salary at all through the massive unemployment faced by Haitian workers.

Then our young woman comrade took the podium again to provide a communist analysis of what these young workers had just told us. She said that the capitalist system exploits workers and keeps them in inhuman conditions. She compared that to a communist system, in which the working class is in power and rules in its interest, concerned with the well-being of all workers so that they can live up to their full potential as a class. She said that these two systems are antagonistic; in the end, the working class, through the communist revolution, will assume power

Continued on page 6

Oakland: 'victory for international workers' unity'

San Francisco, Oakland, and Valley collectives of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) held an exciting and inspiring May Day Dinner at the end of April. Close to 50 multi-generational, multiracial, international workers and students gathered at a local art center. This growth from last year shows "the times they are a-changin."

The walls were decorated with PLP historical, and international art posters about working class struggles from Mexico, Iran, Greece, and El Salvador, to name a few. This was best summarized by a quote and image from Bertolt Brecht: "Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it."

Newer and younger members of our collectives planned and led the program. They are shaping the future towards communism. There were lively discussions throughout the program about the history of May Day and our current struggles within the movement against fascism and genocide in Gaza and around the world. We discussed how we are growing our collectives through our involvement in the mass movement. Our comrades from the Valley collective talked about their future as communists and new members of PLP. They brought drums and guitars to accompany rousing renditions of "Power to the Working Class," "Bella Ciao," and of course "The Internationale." Throughout the event we emphasized the necessity of uniting all workers regardless of race, country, or gender into an international party dedicated to the fight for communism. Only a communist revolution can destroy capitalism and create a share and share alike communist world.

This gathering was the culmination of several months of heightened activity. The external, capitalist world we live in is changing qualitatively and we are responding. PLP members of all generations have participated in many struggles. We have agitated with CHALLENGE and leaflets, held personal and social events, collective planning, and study groups. Education workers held an important and successful teach-in with teachers, students and community members about Israel-Palestine and developed study materials. On campuses, we have supported members and other students who came under attack for fighting tuition hikes and fighting U.S. imperialism/genocide with encampments which demand cease fire and divestment. On the job, we tied the genocide and imperialism to the "financial

crisis" that public agencies claim justifies severe cuts in services like public transit, in schools, in jobs, in wages and working conditions. In neighborhoods, cultural groups, and families, we have had many discussions of why anti- imperialism and anti-Zionism are not antisemitism. Our emphasis on class, the structures of capitalism, internationalism and no borders is key. In the streets, we joined mass demonstrations, rallies against the war industry, imperialist genocide, Israeli Zionist capitalism and attacks on immigrants. We have connected with other groups, such as Bay Area Labor for Palestine, which organized in collaboration with immigrant groups for job actions on May Day and helped plan May Day Marches.

Following up on the energy of the May Day Dinner, PLP members participated in May Day marches in three areas: San Francisco, Oakland, and the Sacramento Valley. Our poster, "No War But Class War" and the CHALLENGE headline "Smash Genocide in Palestine" was well received. The May Day Marches responded to a call from the Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions to stand with Gaza on May Day. In Oakland, the May Day March planned to shut down the port. The strength of on-the-job workers was front & center. Rank and file port workers in the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) carried on their tradition of May Day actions resulting in both morning and afternoon shifts stopping port activity. The Port Authority shut the port down in response. This is a small victory for international workers' unity. We must continue to bring our communist analysis and organize for the final victory, a communist revolution!

to the working class

Pakistan: ‘a day of power, solidarity, & fightback’

On the occasion of International Workers' Day, Pakistan reverberates with the echoes of solidarity with the international working class as we celebrate May Day 2024. In cities and towns across Pakistan, large rallies and parades mark the occasion.This annual celebration serves as a reminder of the hard-fought battles for labor rights and to honor workers’ struggles against the bosses for wage increases and on the job benefits enjoyed today, victories slowly being eroded.

Workers from various sectors, including factories, agriculture, construction, and services gathered to raise their voices for better working conditions, fair wages, and labor rights. Banners and placards carried slogans demanding justice, equality, and respect for the dignity of labor. Some people were also chanting slogans against the Israeli genocidal attacks on Gaza as well.

Comrades in the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) brought workers and students to the rallies, explaining to them how we can get freedom from exploitation through communist revolution.

Workers’ power

We must rethink the old-fashioned lines towed by different leftist organizations because as the past shows, socialism carries the essence of capitalism, like wages. We explained that without a correct line we cannot get out of the clutches of barbaric fascist rulers.

We explained the current drive of the government of Pakistan to privatize all big public enterprises to the local and international bosses. Privatization has always led to job insecurity, decreased wages, and weakened labor rights. As state-owned enterprises are sold to private entities, companies often undergo restructuring to cut costs, leading to layoffs and downsizing. This is a clearly racist attack against Brown workers who make up the country’s majority.

Racist and Sexist attacks on workers

Our comrades explained that as now we have very limited labor rights ,and those rights will be eroded further under privatization. Private companies will certainly exploit loopholes in labor laws or engage in anti-union practices to suppress workers' rights to organize and negotiate for better working conditions. This lack of protection will surely leave workers more vulnerable to super-exploitation and abuse. These attacks show reforms can never be a substitute for revolution.

While analyzing the working class’s economic conditions, we described the tactics used by bosses to divide working-class people to keep intact this horrible, exploitative capitalist system. We stressed the need to fight for protection of workers' rights, and against the sexist disparity of wages based on gender. Daily-wage laborers in construction, agriculture and domestic workers in Pakistan face especially tough conditions under capitalism.These workers usually have no job security, they are least paid and do not have any benefits like health insurance or paid leave. They are used to working long hours in unsafe conditions just to meet some of their needs.

Fighting for a future without exploitation

Under capitalism, the focus is on making profits, so these workers are often treated as disposable resources rather than human beings with rights. The capitalist system prioritizes the interests of business owners and investors over the well-being of workers.

May Day in Pakistan is not just a day off work; it's a day of power, solidarity, and fightback. It honors the sacrifices of those who came before and inspires hope for a future where every worker is treated equally. Only an international communist revolution under the red banners of PLP can give workers the lives they deserve. Long live communism, long live PLP.

Los Angeles: ‘we have a world to win’

LOS ANGELES, May 4- Progressive Labor Party (PLP) celebrated May Day with a multiracial crowd of about 85 workers and students. The day started with a group of PLP members and base setting up tables and musical instruments along with banners and flags calling for communist revolution and justice for families who’ve encountered police terror. The collective effort in setting up the event made it so that all aspects: security, food, drinks, and political content were handled.

Our May Day event was held in a neighborhood park that is significant to a struggle against police terror that PLP has been involved in since November 2019 (See CHALLENGE issue 11/07/19). Leading up to the event a group of workers and students including both Party members and friends worked on a committee to plan the event and evaluate the speeches that were going to be made during the program. The program was a mixture of speeches, songs and poetry as well as activities to ensure everyone was able to meet new people.

Since last May Day the working class has continued to see the ruling class carry out war and genocide while neglecting the needs of students, particularly Black and Latin students. In the weeks leading up to May Day, Party members and our base have been involved in protests on campuses and meetings about school closures in Inglewood. We have PLP members and friends at colleges that have set up encampments and we took a moment to applaud the courageous students across the U.S. and around the world who have put their bodies and academic careers on the line to protest the imperialist genocide Israel is carrying out with U.S. dollars against the workers of Gaza. Students shared their work within mass organizations such as Students for Justice in Palestine. Neighborhood organizers around the school closures in Inglewood joined our May Day and shared stories about their struggles dealing with a system that values stadiums and parking lots more than the education of Black and Latin students.

One student member who recently joined the Party emceed the event with another student. The event opened with a performance from an Aztec danzante group. They have supported actions for justice against police terror that the Party has led and joined in the past. Throughout the event we had members and friends read greetings from PLP members worldwide which discussed their struggles and commitment to communist revolution. We had different group performances of “Bella Ciao,” “Should I Ever Be a Soldier?,” “Too Many Names,” and “The Internationale'' in both English and Spanish. Participants also joined a “speed dating” activity where younger people were paired with the older generation and shared why they came to May Day and what was the biggest thing in the world they wanted to change.

One of the biggest highlights was hearing speeches from a member who was attending his 51st May Day and another member who had joined the Party a couple months ago. The veteran member spoke about the journey from campaigning for Nixon to working within Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and becoming a communist through joining PLP. He then symbolically “passed the torch” to the new member who spoke about how joining the Party filled a need he had to fight for a better world.

A poem with drums and a musical beat was performed by two Party members. The poem included verses about the police murder of Dexter Reed and the imperialist genocide taking place in Gaza. It touched on the catastrophe of global warming and the chemical spill in Ohio from a derailed train. It called for unity among all students and workers. It was critical of nationalism and electoral politics while calling for more people to join PLP. The final speech was given by a veteran member of the Party which highlighted the power of “yet.” People in the world are definitely starting to see that capitalism doesn’t have anything to offer our class. The majority have not “yet” joined the Party to fight for communism, but they still can. People may not have “yet” joined a study group to learn more about communist politics, but they still can. People may not have “yet” read or distributed CHALLENGE, but they still can.

People who attended are not only excited about next year’s May Day, but also committed to the day-to-day struggles that PLP is involved in. Members and friends are reinvigorated to join student encampments. There is a growing west coast education collective that is having monthly study groups. PLP will continue to be involved in mass organizations in order to bring communist politics to the forefront of the struggles and recruit as many members as possible. We have a world to win. Happy May Day!!

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

DC: Workers from Iran remind me that we're communists

On May Day, the Progressive Labor Party was joined by a group of Iranian workers, men and women, at Malcolm X Park in Washington, D.C. for our annual March for Communist Revolution. Their hatred of capitalism and the Islamic Republic of Iran was palpable. "What do you think about Hamas?" I asked. "Fascist!" was their immediate emotional response. I realized then that I had been too cautious about raising criticisms of Hamas's nationalist misdirection of the Palestinian liberation movement at the many protests calling for a ceasefire and humanitarian aid to Gaza. Listening to these workers' description of Hamas as an organization that silences any debate within Palestine made me realize that I have to call for communism at every turn. They said, "Of course, that's what we have to do."

These workers also spoke to the fact that Iran's government cares only about its power base. One of them pointed out that "Iran did not fire a single bullet" in support of Palestinians -- until three of its generals were killed in Syria. The Iranian Islamic ruling class does not care about working-class Palestinians. They enforce a reign of terror against workers in Iran as well. One worker referred to the music being played in the park and said that there was no freedom to play such music in Iran. He continued, an Iranian rapper is facing execution by the state! State violence against women has led to an organized movement called WOMAN LIFE FREEDOM. Their large banner shared this message. Another called for the destruction of the Islamic State.

The U.S. rulers have tried to co-opt (in the minds of U.S. workers) the outrageously sexist character of Iran's ruling class and government. An essay in the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) laid out the horrors facing women in Iran and called for us to care about internationalism and listed Afghanistan and Sudan as well -- without any mention of Palestinians or Gaza. The essay thus served the U.S. bosses by attacking Iran without any support for Palestinians against whom the U.S. and Israel are waging genocide. The NEJM has gone to great lengths to avoid any mention of the 6-month-long genocide in Gaza despite a recent self-criticism of their failure to mention the oppression of Jews in Nazi Germany from 1933-1945. (Only after World War II was over did the NEJM cover the Nuremberg trials). Palestine has yet to get a mention! A joint letter to the journal by comrades pointing this out has not been published and most likely never will. Major medical journals have suppressed support for Palestinians. The American Medical Association has refused to consider any resolution even for humanitarian aid and their journal (JAMA) has only written essays in support of Israel.

At the conclusion of the May Day rally, the Iranian workers sang the Internationale with us and then sang it in Farsi, to great applause from the other May Day marchers.As a result of these conversations, I plan to sharpen my conversations with pro-Palestinian protesters to call for organizing for communism and not just another capitalist nation-state. There are lots of examples in the past where national liberation was won but capitalist oppression and exploitation persisted. The failures in South Africa and Vietnam are the most familiar to U.S. audiences. My thanks to the workers from Iran who helped me think more clearly about this.

Brooklyn Nakba rally open to communist ideas

Recently a group of members of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) participated in a Nakba day rally protesting the war and genocide carried out by the terrorist government of Israel, against the people of Palestine. This war has already claimed the lives of more than 40,000 people, more than half of them children, even newborns, a crime that is being condemned by all the peoples of the world.

During the protest, where there were thousands of repressive, racist and criminal police, we distributed hundreds of CHALLENGEs, which were received with great enthusiasm by many people and we also spread the line of our Party.

Before the march took off there were many police squads in riot gear and other repressive forces of the city who surrounded us on the sidewalk. As hundreds more protestors trickled in and with the leadership of hundreds of brave young people, we eventually took all streets and avenues in all its breadth, disrupting traffic on several streets in that sector of Brooklyn. So even a large squad of hundreds of police could not stop the disruption for several hours. But eventually at the Manhattan Bridge numerous arrests were carried out.

It was an eventful day of great militancy where our PLP group once again demonstrated our role and commitment to the masses and with the conviction that only a communist revolution will end the war and destroy the capitalist imperialist system and all its evils.

'For workers in Palestine'

Below is the poem given at our May Day celebration dinner in Chicago

Well I've never been there, so I wouldn't know,
but it seems it's a place where watermelons grow (Palestine).
To give you a clue about where it's at,
They once had a leader named Arafat.

But divide and conquer is the bosses' game,
their political parties — they're all the same.
To undermine Yasser and the PLO,
Israel funded Hamas and Genocide Joe.
5.3 million over decades you know,
AIPAC gave the money to Genocide Joe.
Schools, hospitals, they had mosques, even steeples,
smaller than Chicago, about 2.3 million people.
Vibrant and beautiful, it all had to go,
bombed into rubble, thanks to Genocide Joe.

In Haiti, in Pakistan, all over the map,
more and more workers are now fighting back.
The students are too -- more encampments you'll see,
at Northwestern, at Emory, at USC.
The reps went to Columbia, they were hoping for a rout,
the students in the camp said get the F___ out!

Back in Chicago, you're likely to hear,
chants far and wide on May Day each year:
"Working People Have No Nations,
Smash Racist Deportations"

The fight against nationalism you know that we need,
it's definitely a message I'm sure we should heed.
For workers in Palestine, it won't be a win
if all we can do is get a new capitalist in.

Colombia: 'No more reformism, long live communism!'

Continued from page 4

port for President Gustavo Petro's reforms, which responds to a previous march called last April by right-wing followers of former president Alvaro Uribe. President Petro, in a populist and opportunistic fashion, gave a speech at Bolivar Plaza, proclaiming himself the heart of the march and all participants allies to his government.

In spite of that, PLP raising the communist red flag and chanting our slogans generated sympathy and was well-received by participants and people passing by, including men and women from a variety of ages who joined us to add around a hundred new enthusiastic participants to our group, notably many women and young people, who seemed attracted to our anti-sexist position and slogans.

Our daily work has been focused on advancing class struggles, learning from our practice to struggle against capitalists collectively, understanding that the struggle for reforms is insufficient, given the huge needs of our international working class. For that reason, our slogans had strong resonance, including, "No more reformism, long live communism!", "Peace between social classes serves criminal bosses!" "Israel, racist and fascist murderer, smash capitalism! "Counterattacks in Gaza, Haiti, Ukraine or Venezuela, Workers' communist revolution!" "Long live International Communist May Day!" These slogans, as well as thirty others, outlining PLP's revolutionary line, were cheerfully and militantly chanted by our friends and onlookers, who requested printed copies to chant along.

We reached Bolivar Plaza, where the president took the stage to give his speech defending liberal reforms, silencing revolutionary voices, which was traditionally done by the sell-out trade unions. Generally, and in spite of the cynical will of this "government of change" to co-opt the march, there was a feeling of an overall rejection of the capitalists' onslaught, which nevertheless, would be an opportunity for the reformists, democrathieves, and opportunists to continue providing cover for this corrupt capitalist system. Our task is to steadily work with those workers sympathetic to our line, and hundreds more, discussing and elaborating strategies based on our political understanding, forged by PLP, to smash the bosses' dictatorship, growing in quantity and quality, and looking to turn these peaceful marches into militant struggles guided by communist ideas and practices.

Haiti: 'the true meaning of May Day'

Continued from page 4

and destroy the bourgeoisie and its private property and borders between countries, and all the misery, racism, sexism, and wars for profit that keep capitalism afloat.

After her conclusion, we moved on to the cultural/social part of the day. Two comrades gave a spirited reading of the poem "Good Morning, Revolution" written by Black communist poet Langston Hughes from the U.S. and translated into Haitian Creole, the language spoken by the masses in Haiti. Another example of international solidarity.

At this point, the floor was opened to the attendees. Many people, students, and workers, spoke out about how this program helped them understand the true meaning of May Day for our class. They felt now they had the knowledge and language to criticize the Haitian bosses' idea of May 1 as a celebration of agriculture and work (with lavish displays of food products for the local bourgeoisie) rather than the holiday of the struggle of the international working class.

The musical group performed songs of struggle, which animated the audience, who sang along with gusto. The final activity was dinner, which was enjoyed by all.

We would like to thank all of those who gave leadership in organizing May Day in Haiti and those who participated in the activities. We have already followed up with some of the attendees who participated in the forum, etc. to continue discussing how to fight against the bosses, both local and foreign, especially in light of the extreme crisis the entire working class in Haiti and the gutter gangs, gangs in uniform, and the gangsters who live in fancy houses. We are discussing how to make our Party grow into a fighting organization of the working class.

Yes, the fight continues!

MLA Conference responds to Gaza genocide

violence, partnering with the U.S. bourgeois university to repress anti-genocide students, all while Israel has deliberately destroyed all twelve universities in Gaza.

Political debates about Gaza

The speakers debated how to fight the Gaza genocide, from tacit support of the right-wing leadership of Hamas to aspirations for communist revolution in the region. The opening and closing speakers—a well-known Marxist theorist of globalized capitalism and a PLP comrade—both attacked U.S. imperialism, seeing the crackdown on college campuses as the result of the breakdown of U.S. dominance. Any serious undermining of Israel, the U.S. garrison state in the Middle East, is a real threat that will be met by state violence here in the university as well in the ruins of Gaza.

The PLP speaker focused first on Israel's role in the Middle East as the enforcer for U.S. imperialism. But he also criticized the nationalism of Hamas and the Palestinian resistance to Israeli occupation and genocide. Our comrade strongly criticized national liberation politics. National liberation "liberates" one group of capitalists against another. It does not liberate any workers or students. They get to fight and die for one boss or another (See excerpt in Box)

William I. Robinson argued that the U.S. has lost the battle for world legitimacy. The Hamas attack has undermined U.S. plans for expansion. There is a crisis of global capitalism and the fascist response to it. What is urgently needed is to build an alliance of the campus left with workers and unions. A professor of Middle East Studies cited examples of economic trends in higher education: drastic cuts in funding, rising tuition, escalating student debt.

Two graduate students in Comparative Literature described how they gained political understanding of the larger global stakes in the Pro-Palestinian movement. One from the University of Minnesota told how defending a Gender Studies professor on her campus led to a larger campaign for divestment from Israel. The firing of a professor at Hobart Smith College led her to see the limitations of academic freedom. "I disagree with what you say but defend your right to say it"—is inadequate to confront the real genocidal violence of colonialism.

From all the rivers to all the seas workers must unite

Several participants reaffirmed that the task is to turn students' struggle for a free Palestine into a struggle for all workers and students to be free of imperialism. This event certainly showed, as have the encampments, that this is precisely the mood of many taking strong action now; "Palestine speaks for everyone," as a newly-banned U.S. professor proclaimed in a widely read article. PLP believes that this movement can indeed thrive and grow if it overcomes racism and nationalism so that the workers of the world unite, "from all the rivers to all the seas," as the banner at PLP's May Day march declared. The MLA Radical Caucus is a fertile site of political struggle over such ideas. Join PLP to bring communist thinking into leadership of this inspiring mass movement and link it to anti-imperialist struggles everywhere.

Israel and the U.S.: Ironclad

The following is an excerpt from the talk given by a PLP comrade at the Gaza mini-conference. See full text at https://multiracialunity.org/2024/04/21/israel-and-the-us-ironclad/

The massive movement in the U.S. and around the world against Israel's genocide has been inspiring in its breadth and militancy. It has played an important role in exposing this atrocity to millions in the U.S. who see very little on American media. This movement has also exposed the close relations between universities, Zionism and the U.S. government. We must give kudos to the students who are fighting the new McCarthyism at Columbia and Yale, among many others, and who have suffered arrests and suspensions. Some politicians have been pressured to at least express distaste at Israel's brutality. However, it would be a mistake to think that there is any chance that the U.S. will divorce from Israel or limit its military support, no matter which party is in office, even if it would prefer that Israel mitigate its behavior. . . .

This region remains of paramount importance to the U.S. empire. It is still the source of much of the world's petroleum, both flowing and unexplored. Yemen is thought to contain the world's greatest unexplored oil deposits. The shipping lanes through the Red Sea and Persian Gulf … are vital. 20 percent of the world's petroleum passes through the Persian Gulf. 40 percent of all Asia to Europe trade passes through the Suez Canal, including 12 percent of all international trade, 12 percent of seaborne oil, and 8 percent of liquefied gas …

In the overall picture of inter-imperialist rivalry, China is the biggest competitor of the U.S. China now gets 40 percent of its oil from the Gulf and is Iran's biggest customer, invests in Saudi energy, and has interest in building a pipeline through Iran. … China is massively extending its worldwide influence through the Belt and Road initiative to boost trade, diplomatic relations and exports. Its worldwide meeting in 2023 involved 0ver 130 countries, including Egypt, and 18 other countries in the Middle East and North Africa. . .

The question is what can we do…We must organize our fellow students and workers to fight against imperialist wars, against racism, against deficiencies in social services. That could mean professional society resolutions, bans on investments or military support by universities, fighting racism and police brutality, demanding better wages and social services – in whatever way we can unite, build leadership from below, expose the nature of capitalism and ready ourselves to lead the eventual struggle to end capitalism, with our fellow students and workers around the world. We have many ongoing and recent struggles to inspire us and a world that needs to be won

Brooklyn May Day: from all the rivers to all the seas, communism will set us free!

Continued from page 8

They reminded the crowd not to buy into the bosses' fascist lies about what the encampments stand for. A new comrade gave a rousing speech about why she joined the Party and encouraged the rest of the crowd join too, "The working class is divided by local bosses and held captive by nationalist ideas; the ruling class does not want us to see that we have more in common with the Pakistani farmer, the Congolese miner, and the migrants on Staten Island than we do with fascist Eric Adams or genocidal Joe Biden. Our destinies as workers of the world are interconnected. We depend on each other to live and fight another day." We closed by singing the Internationale.

As capitalism falls further into decay, its crises and fascism are on full display. Many have woken up to the lies of "freedom" and "democracy" that uphold this system. As they call for a new one, let us answer that call by saying, "The only solution is a communist revolution!"

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

U.S. thugs deport Haitian workers

Al Jazeera, 5/17–The United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) has called on the United States to stop forcibly returning Haitians to their home country, which is facing a months-long surge in gang violence and continued political instability…UNHCR urged US President Joe Biden's administration "to refrain from forcibly returning Haitians who may face life-threatening risks or further displacement" in the Caribbean nation. The call after the UN agency said "another US deportation flight landed in Haiti" on Thursday…

It marks the second such deportation flight from the US to Haiti in the past month. On April 18, the US government sent about 50 Haitian nationals back to the country in a move that drew immediate condemnation from rights groups.

Evidence of U.S. ruling class at work

Washington Post, 5/16–A group of billionaires and business titans working to shape U.S. public opinion of the war in Gaza privately pressed New York City's mayor last month to send police to disperse pro-Palestinian protests at Columbia University…Business executives including Kind snack company founder Daniel Lubetzky, hedge fund manager Daniel Loeb, billionaire Len Blavatnik and real estate investor Joseph Sitt held a Zoom video call…with Mayor Eric Adams (D), about a week after the mayor first sent New York police to Columbia's campus, a log of chat messages shows…some attendees discussed making political donations to Adams, as well as how the chat group's members could pressure Columbia's president and trustees to permit the mayor to send police to the campus to handle protesters…Some members also offered to pay for private investigators to assist New York police in handling the protests, the chat log shows — an offer a member of the group reported in the chat that Adams accepted…The messages describing the call with Adams were among thousands logged in a WhatsApp chat among some of the nation's most prominent business leaders and financiers, including former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, Dell founder and CEO Michael Dell, hedge fund manager Bill Ackman and Joshua Kushner, founder of Thrive Capital and brother of Jared Kushner, former president Donald Trump's son-in-law.

French bosses desperate to hold on to overseas assets

BBC, 5/17–Hundreds of French police reinforcements have arrived in New Caledonia amid rioting that has left five people dead in the Pacific Ocean territory. French High Commissioner Louis Le Franc said officers had been deployed to "regain control of all the areas that we have lost". The unrest erupted this week after lawmakers in Paris voted to change electoral rolls to allow more French residents to vote. Indigenous leaders say the move will dilute the political influence of the native people…French Prime Minister Gabriel Attal said 1,000 extra police were joining the 1,700 personnel already there.

Under the 1998 Nouméa Accord, France agreed to give the territory more political autonomy…More than 40,000 French nationals have moved to New Caledonia since. This week, the National Assembly in Paris proposed granting voting rights to French residents who have lived in the territory for 10 years.

Warmakers prep for world war 3 and making working class pay for it

Financial Times, 4/26– How did the term capitalism arise? … [a]ccording to Michael Sonenscher, a British historian, the term emerged first in 18th-century Europe in connection with war finance… Sonenscher notes … [i]n French, someone who lent money to a branch of the French royal government was called a capitalist (capitaliste)…

…[R]ising geopolitical conflict sparked a 7 percent, inflation-adjusted rise in defense spending last year to a record $2.4 trillion (about $7,400 per person in the US) … Rishi Sunak, UK prime minister, this week put Britain's defense industry on a "war footing" …

…[H]istory shows that governments almost never tell voters the true cost of war, or how they intend to pay for it … The Watson Institute estimates that in the U.S. there has been $8 trillion (about $25,000 per person in the US) in military outlay since 2001, which was "paid for almost entirely by borrowing". Absent early repayment via massive tax rises, miraculous growth and/or default, "interest payments could total over $6.5 trillion (about $20,000 per person in the US) by the 2050s."

BROOKLYN MAY DAY: FROM ALL THE RIVERS TO ALL THE SEAS, COMMUNISM WILL SET US FREE!

From Brooklyn, to Gaza to Mexico smash we are one international working class. Let's smash all borders with communist revolution!

"Whose day?! Our day!! What day? May Day!!" A multiracial, multigenerational, and multi-gender group of hundreds of communists and friends rallied and marched in Brooklyn on May 4 to celebrate the fight of the international working class and our march towards communism. This year's May Day came seven months into the intensified genocide in Palestine driven by Israeli and U.S. bosses. Workers in New York City have since launched countless actions in protest, from blocking bridges to occupying spaces on college campuses. While many chant, "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free," we sharpened this with internationalism to say, "From all the rivers to all the seas, communism will set us free!"

Nothing short of a communist revolution will achieve true freedom for workers anywhere. The main speech embodied this idea, highlighting the dangers of nationalist ideas like Nazism and Zionism: "Nationalism is a fire that will engulf the world in conflict. From all the rivers to all the seas, only communism can put out that fire. It will set us free!"

Following this came a speech by an education worker who was removed from his teaching position for openly supporting students when they wrote a letter to demand the school administration create a space to mourn the death of workers and children in Palestine. He highlighted the power of fighting back as part of a party, specifically as part of Progressive Labor Party: "Ultimately, it was PLP that helped me and my entire school community fight against silencing and isolation. They helped give us the support to overcome cynicism and turn it around into a fight with the capitalist school system."

Before we kicked off our march, a veteran comrade who had just been arrested that week for supporting students at an encampment spoke, "there's no better time to talk about communism with the youth than when you're all zip-tied by police."

Energetic beats shook the streets as we chanted, "NYPD, KKK, IOF, they're all the same!" and "Fight for communism, now's the time to free, free Palestine!" The community chimed in with us, some danced along, and several workers in the neighborhood joined the march. We marched past the blocks where Kimani Gray and others have been murdered by police and made sure to remind the NYPD and the community that we have not forgotten the kkkops' crimes: "How do you spell racist? N-Y-P-D!" One attendee remarked, "This is the most receptive I've seen the community be on May Day. People were open to the chants and ideas."

At the end of our march, two student leaders from the CUNY Gaza Solidarity encampment spoke.

Continued on page 7

WRITE FOR CHALLENGE!

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons.

The next deadline is night of Friday, May 31

Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to www.bit.ly/338ZJow

All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See sidebar on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

SUBSCRIBE or RENEW!

All the communist politics, news, and struggle from around the world!

one-year subscription: $20 individual $45 for institution

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ **State**_____ **Zip**_____

Make check or money order to: Challenge Periodicals, PO Box 808, Brooklyn, NY 11202

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM ★ LUCHA POR EL COMUNISMO ★ PLP